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ABSTRACT

This volume analyzes government policies for helping students pay for education beyond high school and was developed as a result of an October 1994 gathering of policymakers, analysts, and practitioners convened to review federal student assistance and to consider policy alternatives for the Clinton Administration. Chapter 1, "A Fifty-Year Retrospective on Federal Student Aid Policy," traces the evolution of federal postsecondary aid policies over the past 50 years and then reviews the themes and performance of the federal assistance programs. Chapter 2, "Toward the Next Century: Focusing the Debate," identifies a series of key policy questions on the structure and direction of the federal student assistance effort and then reports the main lines of debate when these questions were posed at the October 1994 conference. Chapter 3, "Conclusions: Seeking Guideposts for Reform," concludes by capturing salient points of divergence (in particular the relative importance of restructuring the aid system versus providing more funding for existing programs) and agreement (the need for policies that emphasize student retention and persistence as much as access, for programs that rely more on incentive than regulation, and for policies that distinguish between postsecondary sectors and types of institutions). Includes eight figures, seven tables, and a list of conference panelists and speakers and other participants. (Contains 19 references.) (JB)

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